

**Memorandum of the Meeting  
Regular Study Session/Meeting  
Twenty-Eighth Town Council of Highland  
Monday, August 18, 2014**

The regular study session of the Twenty-Eighth Town Council of the Town of Highland was convened at the regular place, the Highland Municipal, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana, in the plenary meeting chambers on **Monday, August 18, 2014** at the time of 7:20 o'clock p.m. just after the conclusion of a special meeting.

**Silent Roll Call:** Councilors Bernie Zemen, Mark Herak, Dan Vassar, Konnie Kuiper and Dennis Adams were present. A quorum was attained. The Clerk-Treasurer Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings.

**Additional Officials Present:** Cecile Petro, Redevelopment Director was present.

*Also present:* Steve Mileusnich of the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals; Ed Dabrowski IT Director (Contract); Randy Bowman, Assistant Inspector for Electrical; Richard Underkofler, Highland Community Foundation Secretary; Greg Kuzmar, Jim Kessler, Dominic Noce, Bridget DeYoung and Heather Peterson of the Redevelopment Commission; and Carol Green-Fraley, Redevelopment Attorney were also present.

**General Substance of Matters Discussed**

1. *Consideration of the Town Theater Retrofit and Arts and Culture District Establishment.* The Town Council and the Redevelopment Commission discussed the detailed plans to refurbish the Town Theater, its historical and sentimental significance and the project's potential impact on the development of the Kennedy Avenue corridor as an *"economic anchor."*

The Redevelopment Commission, the Redevelopment Director and the Town Council conducted an informal colloquy regarding a series of questions presented by Councilor Herak and disseminated in advance of the current meeting by electronic mail.

The colloquy included responses to the issues raised in his missive. It was noted that the nearby building formerly occupied by the Ace Hardware Store at Condit and Kennedy Avenues, while included on the acquisition list, may not be acquired as part of the Town Theater restoration.

It was further noted that a Livable Communities Grant was awarded to the Town in the amount of \$24,000 associated with this project. It was further noted that the plan was to convert the corridor into an "arts and culture district." Purchases of related buildings on the acquisition list that would further the redevelopment plan, could be acquired by either by Redevelopment Department resources, by Developer private resources, or both. The plan is to establish the Town Theater as an anchor to begin to make the area a destination.

The discussion further explored why the alternative of purchasing, refurbishing and "flipping" the theater was not employed. It was noted that the Redevelopment Department was acting in the absence of the private sector being willing or able to invest. No investors have been identified that would acquire the theater and move the plan forward as envisioned. It was also noted that Arts and Culture Districts could be significant economic drivers.

The discussion noted that the early plan would require a public subsidy of some kind, which as proposed would decline over time. It was noted that the current building codes and the ADA affect the restoration plan, as accessibility is required.

Members of the Redevelopment Commission noted that the placing of a movie theater would not be the first asset that would be chosen for development there but for that fact the theater is there, its nostalgic import, and its landmark character. It was further suggested that these all support the plan and its place in developing an arts and culture district.

The discussion included consideration of the merits and minuses of rehabilitation versus razing and building new for the Theater renewal. The discussion included concerns over the recourse if the operating plans did not work as hoped. The discussion also included whether there would be separate not-for-profit that would manage and operate the Theater, hiring the full-time manager who would coordinate volunteers, or if this would be a managed by the Redevelopment Department.

With leave from the Town Council, Cynthia Fuqua, 3850 Jewett Avenue, Highland, opined that the Town Theater rehabilitation would serve older residents. Ms. Fuqua further opined that the town has nothing for your people and expressed her wish that the Town focus on projects that would bring young people back to Highland.

The Redevelopment Director and Commissioner DeYoung spoke in favor of the economic impact of the arts.

The Town Council President commended the Redevelopment Commissioners and the Redevelopment Director for the work and the due diligence in the plan. It was noted that the plan would be taken under review.

The Redevelopment Director and commissioners departed at this time.

2. Richard Underkofler, secretary of the Highland Community Foundation, requested that the Town Council place on its plenary business meeting agenda an action to confirm support of the Community Foundation's application for a Legacy Foundation "Spotlight" Grant, which would support the hire of someone who would prepare and update the town's Comprehensive Plan. The Town would need to provide office supplies and location from which the planner could work. This would be for the meeting of Monday, August 25, 2014.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the regular study session of the Town Council of **Monday, August 18, 2014**, was adjourned at 8:40 o'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/CPFIM/CMO  
Clerk-Treasurer